

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20

SY-05 MCT-02 A-01 OPR-02 /085 W

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R 261045Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3001

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 11358

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT IN

SUBJECT: POLICE ACTION IN MANIPUR

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY DACCA MADRAS
AND RANGOON DATED JULY 25, 1978 FROM AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IS
REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE

CALCUTTA 1324

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT IN

SUBJECT: POLICE ACTION IN MANIPUR

1. IN THE PAST WEEK THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL INCIDENTS
INVOLVING VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR, INCLUDING THE DAYLIGHT
SHOOTING OF TWO POLICEMEN, A BANK ROBBERY, AND THE
KILLING OF TWO MANIPUR RIFLEMEN (LOCAL MILITITA). THERE
HAVE BEEN ARRESTS AND THERE IS AN EXTENSIVE POLICE DRAGNET
UNDERWAY SEEKING SUSPECTS. GOVERNOR L.P. SINGH, WHO IS
BASED IN SHILLONG IN MEGHALAYA, HAS DECLARED THE VALLEY OF
MANIPUR AND THE STATE CAPITAL OF IMPHAL A "DISTURBED
AREA, UNDER SECTION 3 OF THE ARMED FORCES (ASSAM AND
MANIPUR) SPECIAL POWER ACT OF 1958.

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2. THE OFTEN SENSATIONALIST CALCUTTA EVENING PAPER HINDUSTAN
STANDARD OF JULY 24 HAD BOLD FRONT PAGE HEADLINES
"ARMY CALLED OUT IN MANIPUR VALLEY" OVER A STORY
DATELINED IMPHAL, BUT WITH NO PARTICULAR ATTRIBUTION.
PRESUMABLY THIS STORY RECEIVED CIRCULATION ELSEWHERE
(INCLUDING ON THE VOA NEWS AT 0100 GMT JULY 25),

CAUSING B. LAL, THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE IN MANIPUR CATEGORICALLY TO DENY THAT THE ARMY HAD BEEN CALLED OUT, ALTHOUGH UNDER THE ACT IN QUESTION IT COULD BE IF THE SITUATION WARRANTED. THE "COMBING" OPERATION IS BEING CONDUCTED ONLY BY THE POLICE AND THE PARA-MILITARY MANIPUR RIFLES. GOVERNOR SINGH IS DUE TO ARRIVE IN IMPHAL ON JULY 26 ON A VISIT WHICH THE IGP CLAIMED HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED AND WAS NOT CONNECTED WITH THE CURRENT LAW AND ORDER SITUATION IN MANIPUR. THIS IS, HOWEVER, THE FIRST TIME THE 1958 ACT HAS EVER BEEN INVOKED FOR MANIPUR,

3. COMMENT: IT SEEMS PART OF THE MYSTIQUE OF THE NORTHEAST TO AScribe ANY LAW AND ORDER PROBLEMS TO POLITICALLY MOTIVATED TRIBAL UNDERGROUNDS, BY ANALOGY TO THE CASES OF NAGALAND AND MIZORAM, WHICH BORDER NORMALLY CLAIM MANIPUR. OF MANIPUR'S SOMEWHAT OVER ONE MILLION PEOPLE, ONLY A THIRD ARE TRIBAL, AND TWO-THIRDS ARE HINDU, WITH PERHAPS 300,000 CHRISTIANS. UNTIL WE HAVE FUTHER EVIDENCE, IT MIGHT BE SAFER TO RESERVE JUDGEMENT ON THE TRIBAL ANGLE, AND TO ASSUME THAT IT IS FOR NOW AT LEAST A MATTER OF SIMPLE BRIGANDRY. THERE ARE SOME NAGAS IN MANIPUR (WHOSE CHIEF MINISTER IS A NAGA), AND THERE HAVE BEEN THE USUAL RECURRING REPORTS OF UNDERGROUND NAGAS, AS USUAL WELL AS MIZOS, ACROSS THE BURMESE BORDER;
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HOWEVER, OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT BOTH GROUPS ARE RELATIVELY QUIESCENT AT THIS TIME, AND THERE IS NO SPECIAL REASON TO EXPECT SUCH ACTIVITY IN MANIPUR.

SIGNED PERKINS.

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